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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2020

*Fort Clarence's*  
**RENEWAL**

Rae Town rebirth

Touring the legacy of Barrington Watson

Destination Jamaica a hit at New York Times Travel Show

Work being carried out on the Fort Clarence Beach Park which will officially open this summer.

# World-class Fort Clarence Beach Park set for full opening this summer

**T**HE FORT Clarence Beach Park in Hellshire, St Catherine, is expected to become fully operational by June 2020, following major aesthetic upgrading, the establishment of a slew of amenities, and a significant increase in the number of employees.

General manager at the 50-acre property, Granville Morgan, told **Hospitality Jamaica** that one of the most significant features at the facility will be a pirate-themed water park. However, in order to make entry affordable and accessible, the water park will operate independently and will not be factored in the general entry fee to the property.

“The water park is going to add value to the product, and persons who wish to experience it would be required to pay an additional fee. As it is right now, we are trying our very best to keep the entry for persons affordable, that is why we want to keep the water park independent. We didn’t want to do just a one fee for everything because if you do that, the cost could be very prohibitive,” Morgan explained.

The revival of nightlife at Fort Clarence is also huge on operator Guardsman Hospitality’s agenda in its bid to create a space for family entertainment, and, according to Morgan, a place for “young people to come and enjoy”.



A mobile concessionaire, Sharkie’s, parked at the Fort Clarence Beach Park. **PHOTOS BY ASHLEY ANGUIN**

He speaks of reggae parties on the beach, monthly reggae events, and a lot of live events.

“We want to create a space for young people so that they can come and enjoy themselves in a safe, clean environment that will facilitate the reculturing. Our chairman

is very passionate about that,” Morgan said.

Already, he is in talks with a company that will be doing a skating rink. In addition, the beach park will have five to six restaurants, of which one will offer fine dining, Morgan revealed.



Granville Morgan, general manager, Fort Clarence Beach Park.

The area’s fragile ecosystem has also been taken into consideration and, currently, a reed bed (natural habitats found in floodplains, waterlogged depressions, and estuaries) sewage system is being designed for the property. Cooking via wood fire is prohibited as a deforestation-prevention measure, and a turtle-release plan is in place due to the



From left: Maurice Malcolm, Javion Walker, Kemar Thomas, Anthony Sappleton, Delano Thomas, and Andre Thomas.

beach being a nesting site for them.

Morgan said the entity is focused on immersing itself in the community and has already forged an alliance with the Hellshire Community Council, and will be having regular monthly meetings with them at the park.

In terms of employment, he said the company not only retained the previous staff members they inherited from the Urban Development Corporation (UDC), but was scouting for talent, including beach attendants, bartenders and other culinary staff, from within Hellshire and Portmore.

“We are not looking anywhere else for people for employment. We recognise that we have talented, qualified people in the area. Everybody that you see here working is from the community. That is what we will continue to do,” he said.

“UDC would have done some amount of training already with them (staff), so when we inherited them it was like hitting the ground running; so we didn’t have to do much training. What we are focusing on now is the company culture,” Morgan added.



Granville Morgan, (general manager for Fort Clarence Beach Park), and Jermaine Dwyer, operation manager.

He said Guardsman Hospitality was very cognisant that community integration is integral to the success of any tourism entity,

and so engaging of the residents was a no-brainer.

“You could spend millions talking about

the beautiful beaches; you could spend millions talking about the food; but the people are what matters and we understand the importance of people, and so we are not only providing employment, but we are providing a holistic approach,” he explained.

“We are having talks with the community, too, to help them with their business ideas. There are persons in the area who are craft vendors and persons who do massage, who I understand are certified; we will provide a platform for them to make a living.”

In terms of sports tourism, Morgan said there are plans afoot to bring the Guardsman Games to the community, and discussions are also under way to take the international footsal competition to Fort Clarence.

“Footsal is a big event right across the world. We want to host international beach football because Jamaica is doing well. We want to be the host for the next footsal world cup. The beach is ready. We just need to get the other facilities, the stands, in place,” he said.

[hospitalityjamaica@gleanerjm.com](mailto:hospitalityjamaica@gleanerjm.com)

# Fort Clarence food concessionaires happy with arrangements

**T**HE FORT Clarence Beach Park has had national acclaim for its seafood dishes provided by three concession stands operated by Hellshire and Portmore residents, and under the new Guardsman Hospitality regime, all three remain.

Many people had expressed misgivings that the trio would be given the boot, but on the contrary, following the acquisition, they were invited to formalise their status with the new operators, so they could continue to, unhindered, provide seafood dishes such as steamed fish, butter garlic lobster; curried shrimp, escoveitched fish and bammy to visitors.

Portmore resident Nicole Reid-Samuels has been operating the Tianna's eatery at the facility for 14 years, long before Guardsman Hospitality won the bid to acquire the property from the Urban Development Corporation (UDC) in 2018. For her, business is on a positive trajectory.

"Things have been real good. When I heard that Guardsman was going to take it over, I always said to myself that if there should be a takeover, I will be here still because God put me on this property ... I had strong faith that I would be back here," she told **Hospitality Jamaica**.

"When we met with the management, they said they would be giving us first preference

as we were here first. I was happy with what they said, because then and there we knew that they were looking out for us," she explained.

Due to the facility being closed to the public on weekdays to facilitate renovation and construction, Reid-Samuels and her colleagues come in only on weekends to sell, from temporary mobile food units. Upon full restoration, all three of them are guaranteed one of the kiosks that will be built.

## RECORD NUMBER OF TOURISTS

Reid-Samuels said she has already started to see the rewards of the Guardsman takeover, particularly on the day neighbouring Port Royal welcomed its first cruise ship, which resulted in an inflow of more than 100 tourists to Fort Clarence, a record for the facility.

"I jerked chicken and festival for them, as they didn't want fish," she said. "Thanks to Guardsman Hospitality; they have been great and I really appreciate what they have been doing for Fort Clarence Beach, because customers (are) coming in and they're loving it. The beach is clean. I love everything about it; so thumbs up for Guardsman," she said elatedly.

For Natoya Brooks, co-operator of Jackie and Steven's Fish Hut, she is still amazed at



Nicole Reid-Samuels, a concessionaire who has been at Fort Clarence for 14 years.

the transformation of the 50-acre property where her mother began selling seafood some 15 years ago.

"It is looking great. It has improved a lot and I think it is a very great idea. It's very nice now, and a lot of people are talking about it and can't wait to see it finish as well; so I think it is under better management right now, to be honest. I did not even know it could look like this, honestly. Now you don't even have the seaweed on the beach, and they try their best to clean it and everything," she said.

"We are all really happy and we all know that work is not easy to get, and business to find a place, so it is a blessing same way for us to be able to remain here. We are doing a lot of business now and it's not finished, so whenever it is finished a lot of people are going to want to see. Remember, this is the number-one beach now in Portmore and Kingston overall, because a lot of people don't like going to Hellshire (beach) because of the harassment. So I think this will definitely be in the spotlight, based on what I see," Brooks added.

# Local rum producers host Jamaica Rum Festival

**J**AMAICAN RUM producers have once again joined forces to host the second staging of the Jamaica Rum Festival at Hope Gardens in Kingston on Saturday, February 29, and Sunday, March 1, 2020.

Following its successful inaugural staging in 2019, the Jamaica Rum Festival, presented by Appleton Estate Jamaica Rum in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism through its agencies the Tourism Enhancement Fund and the Jamaica Tourist Board, was recently highlighted by the ministry as one of the significant milestones for the industry last year.

Presenting sponsor Appleton Estate also celebrated another milestone, having been recently recognised as the fourth best-selling rum worldwide by the UK-based 'Drinks International'.

In addition to the presenting sponsor, the Jamaican rum brands that will be participating at the festival include Monymusk Plantations Rums, Hampden Estate and Rum Fire, Rum Bar, Wray & Nephew White Overproof Rum, Charley's JB Rum, and Sangster's Rum Cream. These brands will be hosting rum tastings and other interactive activities within the space.

Patrons of the two-day festival will journey from cane to cocktails as they are exposed to the rum-making process, the unique provenance of Jamaican rums, and sample a variety of rum blends. Additionally, festival attendees will discover the flavour profiles of varying types of rums as well as techniques in cocktail-making. Patrons will enjoy their favourite Jamaican spirit with authentic



Take your 'thyme' to savour this Monymush spice.

Jamaican cuisine and will be treated to superb live entertainment from some of Jamaica's finest musicians.

Noting the inextricable link between rum and Jamaican life, Marsha Lumley, director of marketing, J. Wray & Nephew Ltd. said: "The local rum industry is very much intertwined in our culture, economy and touches virtually every aspect of

Jamaican life. "The Jamaica Rum Festival presents a unique opportunity to showcase what we know to be true of our rum heritage: integrity and quality. Our rums are a true representation of Jamaican excellence and a strong economic driver. We have traditionally been regarded for sun, sand, sea, our athletes, our food, and our music. Through the rum festival, we are positioning Jamaica as a destination where you can enjoy the finest rums the world has to offer."

Continuing, Lumley said: "The Jamaica Rum Festival is a celebration of a storied history of our convivial spirit and growing awareness and appreciation of the unique processes that make our rums well-regarded worldwide. Through the Appleton Estate range of rums, we are leading the premiumisation of the category and educating consumers to savour rum much like any Scotch, cognac, or whiskey. With the positioning of Kingston as a gastronomy destination by the Ministry of Tourism, this is a natural progression to deepen that experience. We want to drive the education of our Jamaican rums."

The collaborative event, which will see the support of the 88-year-old Spirits Pool Association Limited, rum distillers Hampden Estate, National Rums of Jamaica, and Worthy Park Estate will underscore the



Stacianne Tennant from Monymusk pours herself a drink at the launch of JRF 2020. PHOTOS BY KENYON HEMANS

unique characteristics of Jamaican rums and the high standards of production that helped shape and refine the manufacturing process. The inaugural staging of the Jamaica Rum Festival in 2019 was a huge success for its stakeholders and key partners. The two-day event saw the support of 5,000 patrons who enjoyed the various displays of rum brands, tastings, live entertainment, seminars, rum history, food, and drink. The 2020 staging promises no less, with an

expanded venue, additional seminars, and new rum purveyors on board to add to the experience.

The Orville-Hall led Dance Xpressionz; Ky-Mani Marley; Ding Dong, alongside Ravers Clavers; Mortimer, Tessellated; Bugle; Spragga Benz; Cocoa Tea; 'Mr Big Ship' himself, Freddie McGregor; Indie Allen, Capleton; and Protoje are all billed to perform at the festival.



Take a sip of this Monymusk Fusion.

## TEAM JAMAICA

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Team Jamaica is a training programme created to help our tourism organizations & professionals gain a thorough understanding of Jamaica's tourism product, our heritage, cultural sensitivities and customer service.

Administered by the Tourism Product Development Company, it is delivered by our Approved Training Partners (ATPs) across the island. Visit our website at [www.tpdco.org](http://www.tpdco.org) to find the listing of our experienced and qualified ATPs and be part of a movement where "Together Everyone Achieves More!"




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# USVI Department of Tourism launches **NEW BRAND** FOR ST CROIX

*Commissioner Joseph Boschulte unveils  
'St Croix: A vibe like no other'*

**T**HE US Virgin Islands' Department of Tourism has launched a distinctive brand for the island of St Croix.

Dubbed 'St Croix: A vibe like no other', the new brand for 'The Big Island' was launched last week at a Crucian press breakfast at the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association's Caribbean Travel Marketplace in Nassau, Bahamas.

"We believe that St Croix is going to be the big new attraction for tourism in the Caribbean," said United States Virgin Islands Commissioner of Tourism Joseph Boschulte, who said the people, cuisine, history and culture of the destination, coupled with its laid-back vibe, will help position St Croix as a "go-to" Caribbean destination throughout a new marketing campaign.

The commissioner explained that the marketing campaign is designed to strengthen demand for the island and features several influential personalities from the St Croix community as the main voices. One of them, talented Crucian Chef Lamar Bough, was on hand at the launch, where he served the media delicious breakfast offerings, including salt fish gundy; Virgin Islands benye; chicharrones

with pickled onions; and tomato, cucumber and avocado salad.

"Through the eyes, art and expertise of Crucians we can present the breadth and depth of experiences the island has to offer. Through chefs, mixologists, musicians, tour guides, artisans and other professionals, we will explore the Crucian vibe," the commissioner explained, adding "I am excited to roll out our marketing strategy to position St Croix as a destination with its own identity and one whose tourism potential is limitless."

The department launched the campaign with a focus on digital and social media, including Spotify and Pandora, as well as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The Print and broadcast campaigns will be launched in late February and early March, respectively.

St Thomas and St John will continue to be promoted under the overarching United States Virgin Islands banner.

## **STRONG PERFORMANCE**

Commissioner Boschulte reported that on the heels of a successful 2019-2020 Crucian Christmas Festival, which attracted visitors from around the world, the island of St Croix is poised for a



Journalists and travel professionals were in a US Virgin Islands frame of mind at the press breakfast. **CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS**

strong tourism performance this year.

He reported that 2019 saw an increase of 7.9 per cent in visitor arrivals by air to St Croix over 2018, and he is optimistic that with refreshed accommodations coming back online in the months ahead, the island would see more positive trends in 2020.

"With Divi Carina Bay Resort & Casino reopening, the Renaissance St Croix Carambola Beach Resort & Spa undergoing a major refurbishment, the continued growth of the sharing economy, and the oil refinery preparing to deliver fuel supplies this year, St Croix will no doubt be a preferred destination on the radars of leisure and business travellers," said Commissioner Boschulte.

"After the hurricanes of 2017,

impacted islands saw major dips in arrivals with reduced accommodations inventory. However, two years later, airline capacity on St Croix is actually ahead of pre-storm levels; with continued hard work and focus, we expect that trend to continue," the commissioner asserted.

This summer, St Croix will welcome a third American Airlines daily flight from Miami between June 4, 2020, and August 17, 2020.

The carrier also recently extended Charlotte-St Croix flights from Saturday-only to daily during the peak Christmas period.

Travellers to St Croix can look forward to upcoming events such as the Agriculture and Food Fair (February); the St Patrick's Day Parade (March); and Taste of St Croix and the St Croix Food & Wine Experience, both of which happen in April.



From left: Ian Turnbull, director of the Division of Festivals; Commissioner of Tourism Joseph Boschulte; and Alani Henneman-Todman, the Department of Tourism's director of communications.



Chef Lamar Bough (right) of St Croix chats with freelance journalist Robert Curley at Caribbean Travel Marketplace in The Bahamas on Thursday. Chef Lamar served up a tasty Crucian breakfast for travel writers and agents.



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with SPIRITS

A jaw-dropping view of the Blue Mountains from north of the Orange Park property.

# Touring the LEGACY of Barrington Watson



Some of the easels that Barrington Watson used over the years. PHOTOS BY PAUL WILLIAMS

**Paul H. Williams**  
*Hospitality  
Jamaica Writer*

**F**ROM OUT of the blue the invitation came. I could not recall the place in the hills of Yallahs, St Thomas, to which my presence was requested, so I did some quick online research.

It turned out to be the former home and studio of late master painter Barrington Watson, father of renowned sculptors Basil and Raymond, and is now marketed as the Orange Park Museum and the Barrington Watson Legacy Tours.

I did not hesitate to put the date of the official launch on my bucket list,



The tomb of Barrington Watson at Orange Park in St Thomas.

for I was going to visit a place where the historical footprints and fingerprints of my

ancestors are still visible.

On the day of the event there was another





A section of the living room of the Orange Park Great House in St Thomas.

'must-go-to', but the great house was a much stronger pull. Ancestral calls, perhaps. My crew and I did not take long to reach Yallahs, where we took a left turn on to Newland Road, which is reasonably steep, and somewhat uneven.

In a few minutes we were on to what appeared to be a recently paved section. I commented on it, but wondered whether it would be like that for the rest of the way. To a certain extent it was, until suddenly the narrow parochial road became bumpy and steeper. At one point the vehicle refused to go any further, blocking the path of the others behind us.

I got out of the vehicle so that the driver could do his thing, reversing to make space. And it worked. Soon, we were back on our way – way, way up where we got glimpses of the land below. The excitement superseded the rocky ride, and what a treat we got when we arrived.



Barrington Watson's favourite work, a portrait of his mother, Lilieth.

The place is just fantastic. The gardens, the lawns, the structures, Barrington Watson's monumental tomb, the vistas of the mountains below and in the distance, the layout and decor of the dining tables and chairs, the instrumental jazz music were the prizes we got.

The property was a coffee plantation that went through many

changes in size and ownership. Some of the structures are over 400 years old and are being maintained and preserved by Doreen Watson, Barrington's widow, to grant him his wishes of making the place accessible to Jamaicans of all walks of life.

And I must say I am the first official 'tourist' to enter the great



The Orange Park Great House, located in the Yallahs hills in St Thomas, is now open to the public.

house as part of the first official tour. I did not position myself to be. It just happened. The three-level rock structure of thick stone walls was actually the overseer's house that fell into disrepair, and was refurbished by Watson after he purchased it in the early 1970s. The original great house itself was ruined beyond restoration.

Inside the current great house are Watson's furniture and other paraphernalia that are now official artefacts, not to be touched and handled. And, of course, there are the pictures done by the master himself. They include portraits of his parents, and it said that 'Age of Wisdom', his mother's portrait, was his favourite piece. There are also pieces that Watson collected over time.

The second level leads to the attic where there are two antique beds, and I was told by none other than his daughter, Janis Altenhofen that that was the "orgy room". Really?

Orgy apart, it seems like somewhere I would return to write my first novel, which I might just call 'The Orgy Room'. It is spacious, breezy and quiet, and

inspirational. But I was not prepared for what I would say was the high point of the tour.

From the attic's windows there is a jaw-dropping view of the Yallahs Pond juxtaposed against the azure Caribbean Sea. I had a little peek of them from outside upon my arrival; but what I saw from above was just beyond amazing. Not even Barrington Watson himself could have replicated it.

Other points of interest are the tennis and honeymoon cottages, and Studio Barrington, Watson's former workshop. In it are the tools of his trade and everything that defines his artistry. You cannot imagine him not being in this space, in which one of his biggest pieces, 'The Pan Africanists', is still mounted.

So, without doubt, I was glad I chose Orange Park over Kingston's railway station, which itself is a historic place that is screaming for some attention, and wondering when, if any at all, it will be receiving passengers in its old and rusting bosom again.

[hospitalityjamaica@gleanerjm.com](mailto:hospitalityjamaica@gleanerjm.com)

A stunning view of the Yallahs Pond from the attic of the Orange Park Great House in St Thomas.



# Destination Jamaica a hit at New York Times Travel Show

**T**HE JAMAICA Tourist Board's (JTB) booth was a big hit during The New York Times Travel Show, held at the Jacob Javits Convention Center from January 24-26. Travel professionals and eager attendees flocked to the Jamaica booth to receive information on new developments, attractions and vacation packages to the destination from partners Melia Hotels International, Palladium Hotel Group and Rose Hall Development.

JTB's District Sales Manager Northeast USA, Marcia Sinclair, was among the featured presenters at the trade day on Friday. During the Caribbean Tourism Organization's Focus on the Caribbean seminar, Ms Sinclair highlighted the destination's events and festivals being celebrated throughout the year, including the Jamaica Rum Festival, Bob Marley

celebrations, carnival in Jamaica, Reggae Sumfest, and more.

During her presentation, Ms Sinclair shone the spotlight on the island's unprecedented growth in 2019, welcoming 4.2 million visitors. She highlighted the newly unveiled campaign, 'Jamaica, Heartbeat of the World,' sharing a vibrant video as she provided a stark reminder to the audience of Jamaica's reggae rhythm, infectious vibe, and invigorating pulse that is like no other.

The New York Times Travel Show is the ultimate travel and tourism event in North America with close to 600 exhibitors from across the globe. Over 30,000 consumers and travel professionals attended the three-day weekend extravaganza in hopes of being informed about the next destination they plan to visit.



Jamaica Tourist Board's Northeast team of Philip Rose, (second right) regional director; Marcia Sinclair (left), district sales manager; and Kenton Senior (second left), business development manager, pose with travel partners (from third left: Adam McGregor, sales and promotions manager, East Coast USA Melia Hotels International; Girdeen Myers, destination relationship specialist, Rose Hall development; and Francina Mason, business Development manager, North East-Eastern PA, Palladium Hotel Group. **CONTRIBUTED**



Kenton Senior, business development manager – Northeast USA, Jamaica Tourist Board, shares information with an eager attendee at the Jamaica booth during the New York Times Travel Show. **CONTRIBUTED**



Edmund Bartlett, minister of tourism, (third right) greets Lisandro Menu-Marque (third left), director general, Desarrollo Internacional Globalia Corporation, as Donovan White (second left), Jamaica's director of Tourism and Gregory Shervington (right), regional director, Continental Europe, Jamaica Tourist Board, looks on. Also pictured are members of the Globalia group. The discussions focused on partnerships through hotel development and airlift opportunities. FITUR offers a global opportunity for tourism professionals to meet and discuss travel market trends over five days of meetings and networking.

## FITUR experiences the beat of Jamaica

DESTINATION JAMAICA made her presence felt at the recently concluded FITUR international tourism trade fair in Madrid, Spain. With the new Jamaica, Heartbeat of the World brand positioning on display, the booth was abuzz with activities. Members of the Jamaican delegation met with representatives of Globalia, a leisure, tourism and travel group.



Destination Jamaica booth at FITUR 2020 was booked with clients wanting to know more about new developments and product offerings **CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS**

# Sandals' director of romance talks *love*

*Shares wisdom live on Fox Business Network ahead of Valentine's Day*

**V**ALENTINE'S DAY is just around the corner and last Tuesday, Sandals Resorts International's very own Director of Romance, Marsha-Ann Brown, was live on Fox Business Network's 'Mornings With Maria', sharing the resort company's many options for the perfect romantic rendezvous.

'Mornings with Maria' features anchorwoman Maria Bartiromo and a roundtable of rotating industry titans and economic experts discussing the major news and themes driving the business day and the market moves.

As an expert in all things love and romance for Sandals Resorts, Brown eloquently highlighted the fact that each Sandals Resort has its own personality and something for every generation to enjoy. Millennials, Brown shared, are poised to enjoy the company's newest gem, Sandals Barbados, while Boomers are likely to enjoy visiting the company's flagship resort, Sandals Montego Bay. While on air, Brown highlighted the company's romantic luxury-included resorts, the unique over-the-water concepts, five-star global gourmet dining, and much more.

With Valentine's Day quickly approaching, the company's director of romance established Sandals Resorts as the ultimate romantic getaway, emphasising that the underlying concept which inspired the brand's genesis nearly 40 years ago still rings true today – love is all you need.

"One of the things we've established since 1981 is that our chairman and founder had one concept in mind, and that's really 'love is all you need'. Year over year, love does not change and being romantic, we believe that we've chosen the best resorts nestled on the most beautiful beaches. From sunrise to sunset, love is woven into every moment between," she said.

Check out her segment by clicking on the link, <https://video.fox-business.com/v/6127235448001/#sp=show-clips>



Marsha-Ann Brown, director of romance, Sandals Resorts. CONTRIBUTED



BARTLETT

## Tourism ministry endorses Portland weekend event

**Gareth Davis Sr**  
*Hospitality Jamaica Writer*  
**PORT ANTONIO, PORTLAND:**

THE TOURISM Enhancement Fund (TEF)-sponsored Portland Paradise Weekend (PPW), which was deemed a success, has been fully endorsed by Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett, who also stated that the event has the potential for growth.

Minister Bartlett, who has been praised highly for transforming Jamaica's tourism sector into a modern-day industry, singled out the three-day weekend event as one that will continue to enjoy the support of the tourism ministry and its relevant agencies.

"This is a great initiative that showcases the best of Portland and its wonderful tourism offerings," the minister noted.

"We at the ministry take note that it also attracts a lot of Portlanders living in the diaspora, as well as growing number of overseas visitors. Portland is one of the most beautiful parishes in the country, and an initiative like Portland Paradise can only add to the diversity of our tourism product."

The tourism minister added that the ministry has earmarked Portland for future development, noting that the upgrading of the Ian Flemming International Airport in Boscobel, St Mary, will make it easier to get visitors into Portland.

Meanwhile, senior strategist in the Ministry of Tourism, Delano Seiveright, said he is cognisant that

*'This is a great initiative that showcases the best of Portland and its wonderful tourism offerings.'*

the Portland Paradise Weekend has been garnering a lot of support from locals living in the Corporate Area, adding "it is now being viewed as a chance to get away and visit beautiful Port Antonio for the weekend and in a very affordable manner".

He added that the beauty about Port Antonio is that it is not heavily commercialised and offers the perfect getaway. He noted, "I can easily see this event as one of the must-see events on the calendar, and the entire parish of Portland can only be better for it."

The Beaconstride Enterprises Portland Paradise Weekend was held from December 6-8 with a welcome party dubbed 'fire and ice' at Hotel Tim Bamboo. On Saturday, December 7, the popular sun break breakfast beach party at Shan-shy Beach; and Frosted, which is an all-white and all-inclusive beach party, was held on the 8th of December. "Now in its fifth year, the PPW event will be held from Friday, December 11 through to the 13th," commented Eunice Rashford, president of Beacon Stride Enterprises.

She added "This event's for both the local and overseas guests. I am forever grateful to Jamaica Tourist Board and the Tourism Enhancement Fund for their endorsement and sponsorship. Approximately US\$16,000 or J\$2.1 million was spent for food, hotel, and Airbnb accommodation over the three-day period.

"Additionally, local businesses saw an increase in their sales. Overall, the event boosts the local economy. I am pleased that the Ministry of Tourism and its agencies see it fit to support this initiative. Their support has driven our marketing campaign to a higher level."

One of the murals painted in Rae Town over the weekend of January 25-26.



# Rae Town rebirth

– Kingston creative's community tourism thrust for inner-cities



St Michael Primary School dancers bringing their funk into the mix. PHOTOS BY PAUL WILLIAMS

**Paul H. Williams**  
*Hospitality Jamaica Writer*

**R**AE TOWN, a historic inner-city community in east Kingston, is known the world over for the weekly sound-system dances and oldies sessions of yesteryear that unfolded on Rae Street for several years.

Those sessions brought many people from all walks of life to the community that emerged in the 1860s. It was a vibrant place, immortalised in songs, such as A Boom She Boom'. Now, only the memories of the glory days are floating on the sea breeze. The parties are over.

For many reasons, the speaker boxers have been silenced several years ago, and the place is now experiencing urban rot, though the fishing village across the street is still teeming with seafood.

And now, Kingston Creative is pushing for Rae Town to be a community tourist destination. "Rae Town Artwalk is just one of several downtown Kingston events that will be held to encourage more earning from community tourism and to position Kingston as the 'Creative Capital of the Caribbean'," Kingston Creative said in a release.

The thrust is being financed through a \$3-million European Union Jamaica Social



Southern Strikers Marching Band creating much excitement at the art walk on Saturday, January 25.

Investment Fund grant under its Poverty Reduction Programme, “which is targeting some of the most disadvantaged and marginalised groups in the Jamaican society, which, oddly enough, are some of the most creative communities that put Jamaica on the global map,” Andrea Dempster-Chung, co-founder and executive director of Kingston Creative, told **Hospitality Jamaica**.

The grant will allow Kingston Creative to strategically invest in five downtown Kingston communities (Allman Town, Tivoli Gardens, Beat Street, Trench Town, Rae Town) this year, and murals will be painted live during community Art walks.

The erection of signage; training the youth in event and cultural hosting skills to stage their own cultural tourism events; working with established tour groups to bring visitors into the communities on an ongoing basis, are among the things slated to be done.

The first of such art walks took place in Rae Town on Saturday, January 25, in association with Women Empowering Women.

“Our goal at Rae Town specifically was to develop a tour, create access by promoting the event, and leave something permanent in the community,” Dempster-Chung said.

While the fun and excitement, including the music of Classique Disco, were taking over Rae Street in front of Capricorn Inn (former home of the old-hits



Tevin, a young patron, enjoying a fried sprat in the Rae Town community on Saturday, January 25.

sessions), two murals were being painted in front of a playfield. The murals were conceptualised, and designs selected, by the community, Dempster-Chung said, and the painters were assisted by community artists.

Volunteers from Women Empowering Women and the Police Youth Club conducted tours of historic spots, such as the cholera cemetery, the perimeter of the General Penitentiary, St Michael’s Primary School, Charlotte Street (where entertainer Shaggy was born), Salvation Army, and a local bar.

The youth volunteers, who were trained on January 18, Dempster-Chung said, “will stay engaged in the programme over the next few months to share knowledge and best practices with other communities”.

“It was very promising, and we look forward to continuing the effort throughout other communities in downtown, as Kingston Creative believes that the communities and creatives have so much to offer,” Dempster-Chung explained further.

On the day, people were shuttled into the community from New Kingston. At least four tour operators were involved, some of whom confirmed that they would be bringing people back to Rae Town.

“In terms of our internal assessment, the event was a significant milestone for us, as for a couple of years, we have been working steadily on community awareness and engagement, building relationships and improving their ability to participate in and benefit from the revitalisation of downtown and its transformation into a thriving creative city,” Dempster-Chung said.

[hospitalityjamaica@gleamerjm.com](mailto:hospitalityjamaica@gleamerjm.com)



Artwork for sale along the art walk.



Minister of Health and Wellness Dr Christopher Tufton, who was in the area on a mosquitos-eradication mission, having a chat with Natallie Rochester, project manager – community art walks, Kingston Creative.



MC Phylecia Renee having a grand time with patrons during the Rae Town art walk.



The accounts department was the recipient of the Department of the Year Award. The team (from left): Tamikea Williams, Melica Allen, Michael Sterling, Lennox Elvy, Verona Maye (financial controller), La-Danna Peters, and Nathanael Brown. They received day passes and Lunch at the Puerto Seco Beach in St Ann.

# El Greco celebrates its OUTSTANDING PERFORMERS

General Manager of the Year awardee, Michael Wallace, accepts a certificate and a Digicel phone from General Manager Dr Mervel Marie Grant.

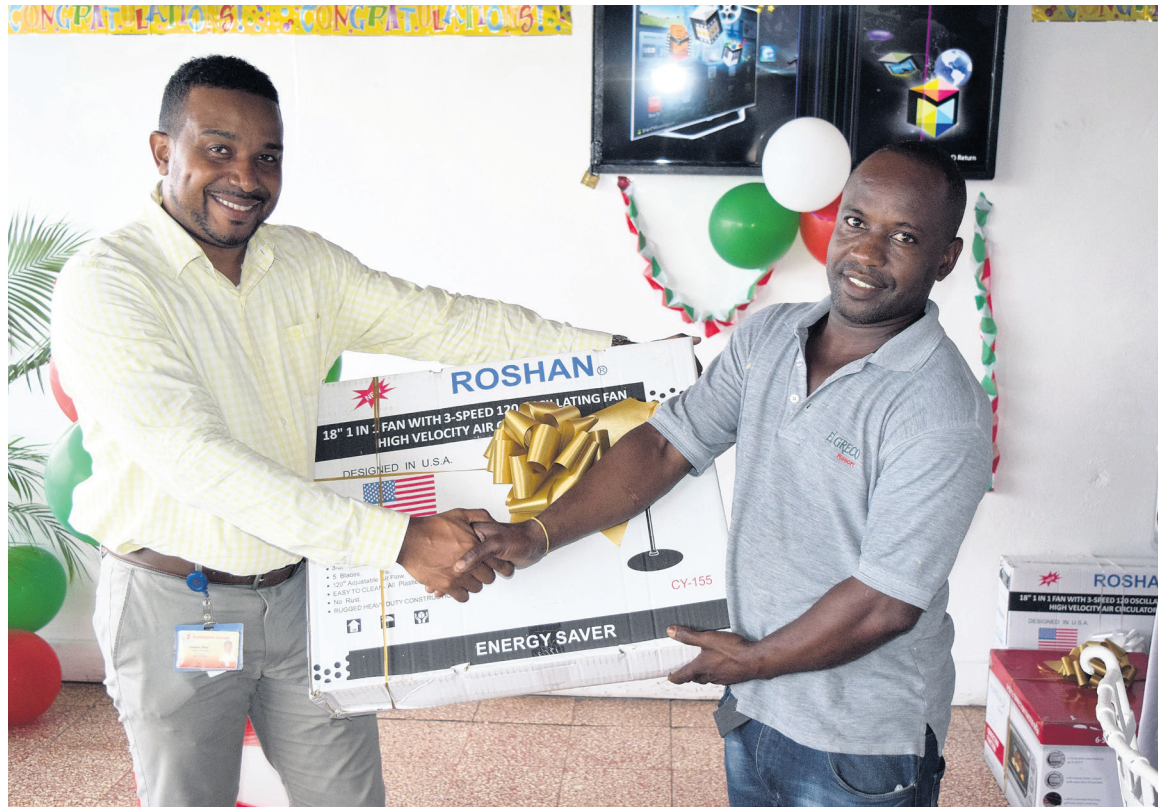


**M**ONTEGO BAY'S El Greco Resort recently recognised its staff for their outstanding contribution during an awards ceremony at the property. **Hospitality Jamaica** brings you highlights of the event.

Recipient of the Assistant Supervisor Award, Sous-Chef Leroy Watkin (centre) accepts his prizes of dinner for two at Tryall Club and a microwave oven from Dorothy Haughton, human resource officer. Sharing in the occasion is Executive Chef Washburn Lawrence. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



Most Improved Employee Ricardo Whittake, accepts a certificate from Ruth Reid, food and beverage supervisor.



Oscar Russell (right), Smile and Courtesy awardee, accepts a Roshan fan from Lennox Elvy.



Mrs Verona Maye, financial controller, accepts a prize from Dr Mervel Grant as one of three recipients of the General Manager Award.



Heart, Soul and Spirit of El Greco recipient Peter Gooden (right) accepts his Roshan fan prize from Lennox Elvy.



One of three awardees for the General Manager Award, Nickoy Williams, poses with Dr Mervel Marie Grant just before accepting a blender from her as his prize.



Manager of the Year Marcia Miller(left), housekeeping supervisor, receives her prizes of a weekend for two at Round Hill Hotel and Villas and a 32-inch smart TV, from human resource officer Dorothy Haughton.



# STEWART FAMILY PHILANTHROPIC AWARD

*“If you don’t share, then  
you aren’t serving a purpose.”*

*– Gordon “Butch” Stewart  
Founder and Chairman, Sandals® & Beaches® Resorts*

# ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE *And a* **BIG HEART**

You know the Sandals Resorts brand.  
You know the man who built it.  
You probably also know that, to  
Gordon “Butch” Stewart, the Caribbean  
is more than just a destination: it’s  
home. He thinks of himself as a local  
businessman embracing his community—  
and giving back to this region is  
something he embedded in the  
company from the start.

These are the words Butch Stewart passed along to his children. Coming from humble beginnings, he made it his mission to improve the lives of those living in less than ideal conditions in the Caribbean. His passion for preserving, respecting, and caring for the place his family calls home was instilled in his offspring from an early age, and the unwavering desire to give back to those less fortunate led the family to create sustainable, innovative, and even self-replicating programs that improved lives.

Today, Jamaica, The Bahamas, Turks & Caicos, Antigua, Saint Lucia, Grenada, and Barbados all benefit from the programs and assistance initiated by the Stewart family. So, too, have the islands of Barbuda, Dominica, and Haiti because the Stewart family wants to ensure that not a single Caribbean island neighbor is left out of the programs that have paved the way in aiding nearly a million people with hundreds of sustainable projects across the region.

Recognizing that it takes an army to make change possible, the Stewart Family Philanthropic Award (SFPA) was created to shine a light on the work and passion of a truly deserving individual or organization making an impact in the Caribbean through their own philanthropic efforts. These are stellar change-makers who have made a difference through their exceptional leadership and patronage to the philanthropic sector in the Caribbean for ten years or more, addressing the region’s biggest challenges in brave new ways.

*Heidi Clarke, the Executive Director of the Sandals Foundation—the philanthropic arm of Sandals and Beaches Resorts—is the very first recipient of the Stewart Family Philanthropic Award.*



*Adam Stewart,  
Heidi Clarke and  
Sandals Foundation  
Board Member,  
Peter Blum*

Heidi Clarke is one of the people who, alongside Adam Stewart and the Sandals Foundation ambassadors, drove the idea that breaking the cycle of poverty in the Caribbean is possible. In this way, the Sandals Foundation became a driving force in the Caribbean, making a difference in the lives of marginalized children and families.

Clarke believes that helping others is her calling and she has made a personal commitment to be of service to those who need it most. As Executive Director of the Sandals Foundation, Clarke alongside 15,000 team members support thousands of Sandals Foundation projects and programs, as well as develop and maintain relationships with nonprofit organizations in the Caribbean community, corporate partners, valued donors, and volunteers. Clarke practices what she preaches. She participates in beach clean-ups, is in the field offering help during natural disasters, pushes for free medical and dental clinics, champions women’s empowerment programs including mentoring teenage girls, supports and teaches environmental preservation, participates in adopted school renovations...and the list goes on. For Clarke, serving Caribbean communities and seeking out opportunities to be on the ground, partnering with others to discover where the need is greatest, has always been and always will be a precious ambition—a determination that she has already passed on to her children, just as her parents passed on to her.



For more information about the Stewart Family Philanthropic Award visit [www.sandalsfoundation.org/stewartphilanthropicaward](http://www.sandalsfoundation.org/stewartphilanthropicaward)